

CHWNE Module 4 Lesson 1

Henry II (1519 -1559)

& The Women in His Life

- **Catherine de Medici**
- **Diane de Poitiers**



We will start with Henry's Early Years

Henry II was born at Chateau St. Germain en Laye in **1519**. He was the second son of **King Francis I** and **Queen Claude**.

He had 7 siblings but only 2 survived past the age of 30.

Henry II



Henry's Early Years

Henry was used as a pawn in the **King's Ransom** from **1526 to 1530**.

He was just 7 years old when he began a 4-year term in a Spanish prison with his 8 year old brother, **Francis II**.

They had to take the place of their father until the ransom money was raised.



Henry married **Catherine de Medici** - niece of the **Pope Clement VII**, in **1533**. It is reputed that this marriage was one of the conditions of King Francis' ransom.

Other sources claim that Francis himself arranged the marriage.




Catherine de Medici



Attributed to François Clouet. Alternative names ...

Victoria and Albert Museum. Native name ... (Hearn, Karen, ed. *Dynasties:*

Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630. New York: Rizzoli, 1995. ISBN 0-8478-1940-X.) 2. Victoria and ...



Henry and Catherine were both **14 years old when they got married.**

Three years after Henry and Catherine's marriage, Henry's brother **Francis II** died unexpectedly. Henry became heir to the throne.

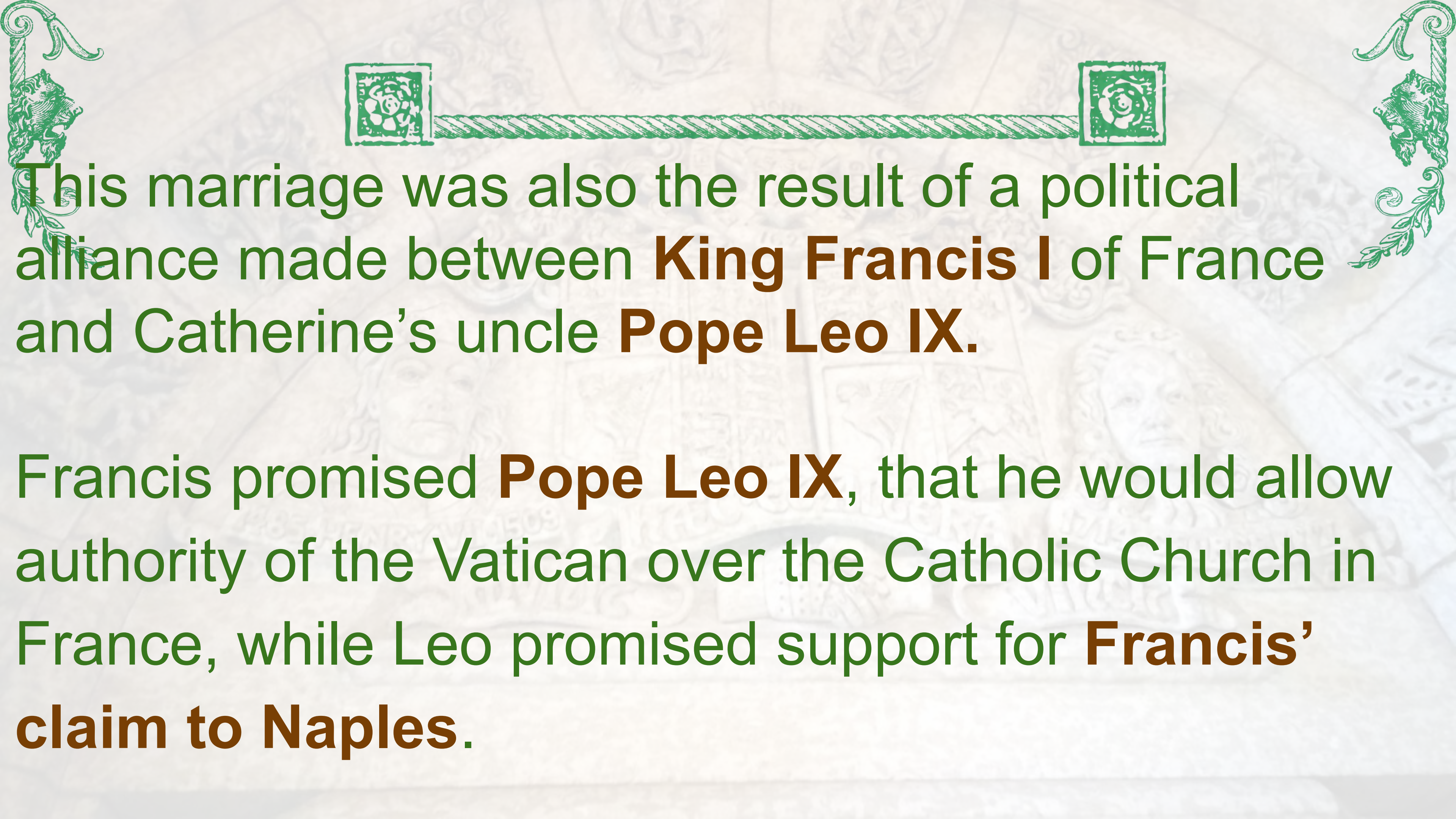
Catherine and Henry eventually had 10 children.

Catherine de Medici's Early Years



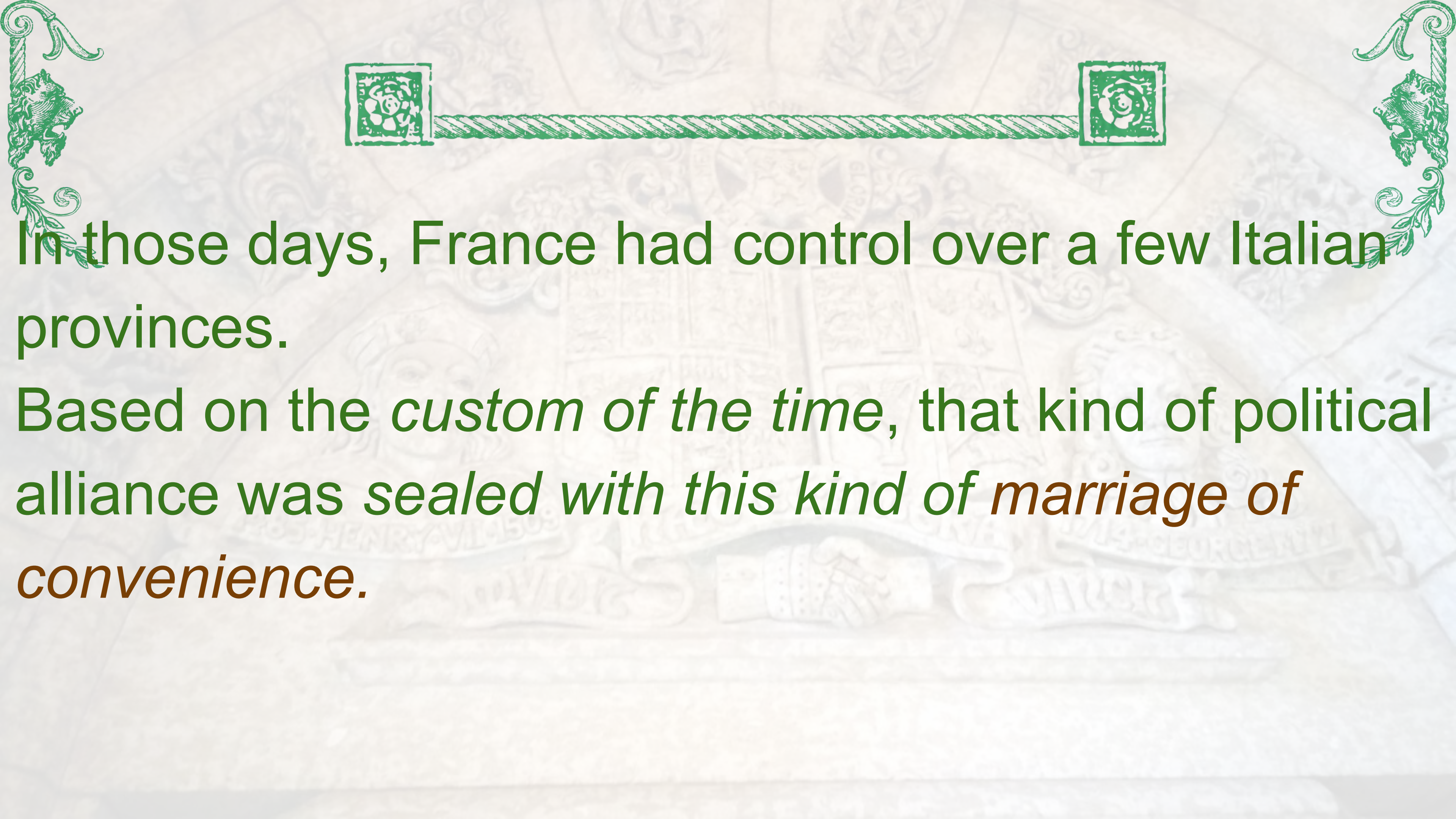
Catherine was born in **1519** and died **1589**. Her father was an Italian Duke and her mother a French noblewoman.

Her mother **Madeleine de La Tour d'Auvergne**, was married to **Lorenzo II de' Medici**, ruler of Florence.



This marriage was also the result of a political alliance made between **King Francis I** of France and Catherine's uncle **Pope Leo IX**.

Francis promised **Pope Leo IX**, that he would allow authority of the Vatican over the Catholic Church in France, while Leo promised support for **Francis' claim to Naples**.



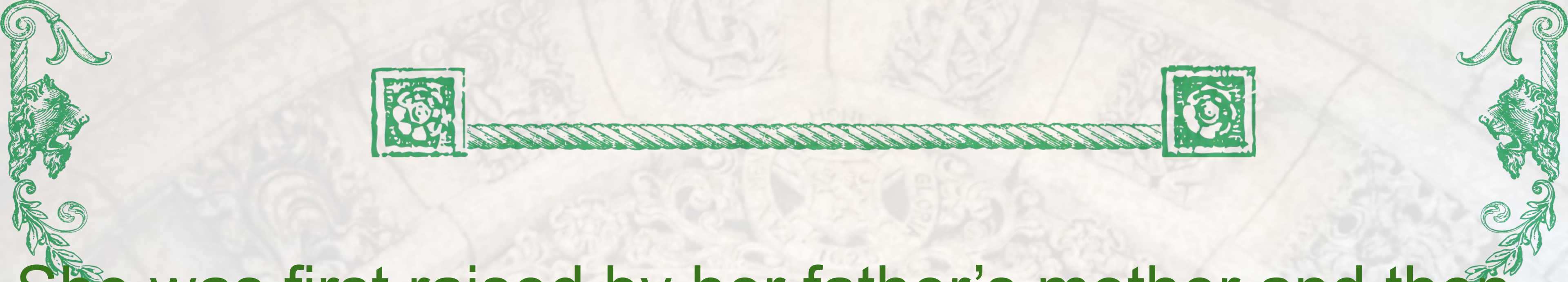
In those days, France had control over a few Italian provinces.

Based on the *custom of the time*, that kind of political alliance was sealed with this kind of *marriage of convenience*.



When Catherine was a few days old, her parents died of the plague.

Francis I wanted her to be raised in the French court but her great uncle **Pope Leo IX (Giovanni de Medici)** was against it.



She was first raised by her father's mother and then by an aunt.

When **Pope Leo IX** died, another relative **Giuliano de Medici (Pope Clement VII)** took her to be raised in the **Palace Medici in Florence.**

Giuliano de Medici (Pope Clement VII)



By
Sebastiano



In **1527**, a coup in Florence overthrew **Pope Clement VII**.

Catherine was kidnapped and spent 3 years in various convents.

Pope Clement appealed to **Charles V - the Holy Roman Emperor**, for help.



Charles V laid siege to Florence in **1529**, resulting in its surrender in **1530**.

Charles V was then crowned as **Holy Roman Emperor over Florence** because he helped to retake the city.



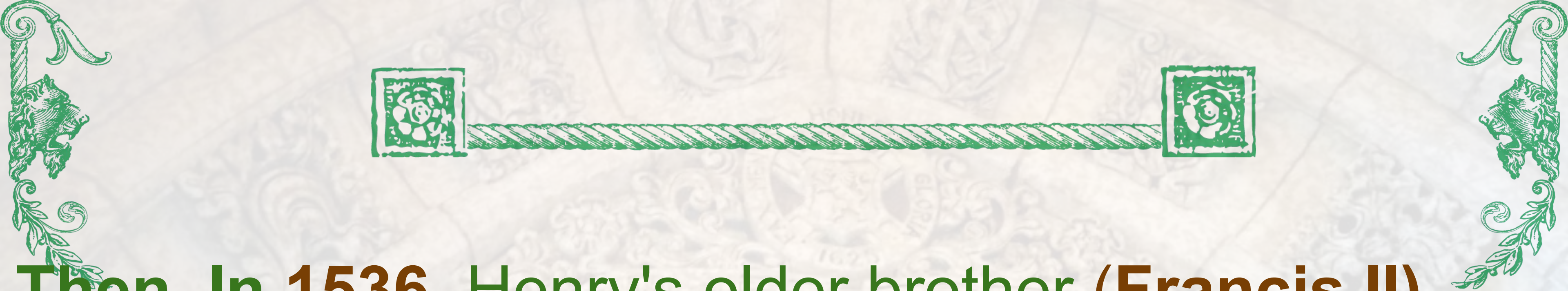
Catherine was sent to Rome to be reunited with **Pope Clement VII**, who set about looking for a husband for her.

It is said that as part of Charles V's conditions for Francis I's ransom, **Henry II of France had to marry Catherine de Medici.**



Other sources suggest that King Francis I suggested the marriage in **1533**.

Catherine remained a staunch Catholic because she was raised by relatives in Florence, and then in a convent for 3 years, after the death of her parents.



Then, In **1536**, Henry's older brother (**Francis II**)
passed away at 18 years old.

Henry now became the heir apparent.

There was pressure for the heir apparent to produce
legitimate male heirs himself.



After her marriage to Henry II, Catherine did not conceive for 10 years.

It was during this time that Henry took mistresses, the most important of them being **Diane de Poitiers.**

Diane de Poitiers

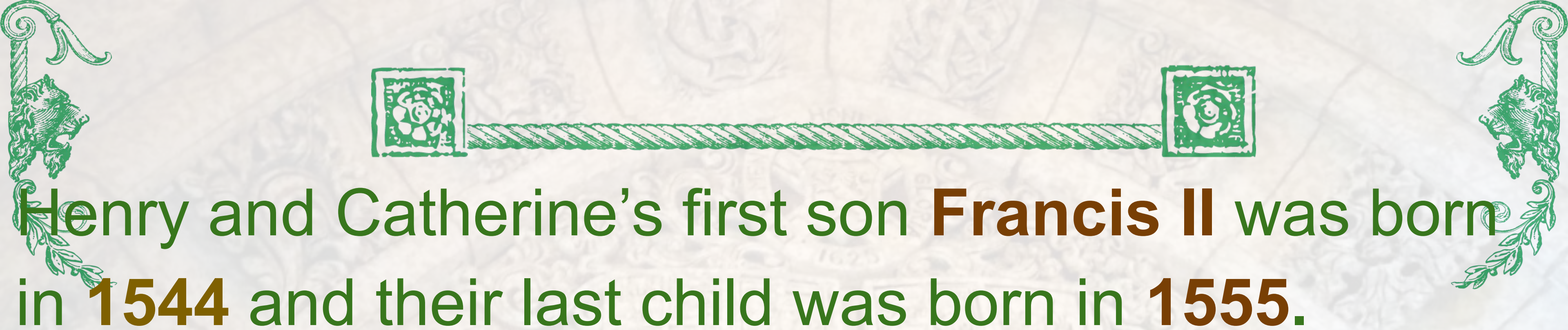


Workshop of [François Clouet](#) - Sigrid Ruby, Mit Macht verbunden.

Bilder der Favoritin im Frankreich der Renaissance.

Freiburg im Breisgau : Fördergemeinschaft Wissenschaftlicher Publikationen von Frauen, 2010, [ISBN](#)

[978-3-939348-18-4](#), p. 496



Henry and Catherine's first son **Francis II** was born in **1544** and their last child was born in **1555**.

Henry II did not become king until **1547**, when his father Francis I died.

Catherine became Queen consort and was crowned in **1549**.



Catherine bore 10 children of whom 6 survived to adulthood.

Henry died in **1559** because of a jousting accident.

As soon as Henry died, Catherine banished Diane de Poitiers and stripped her of the property and position which rightly belonged to the queen.

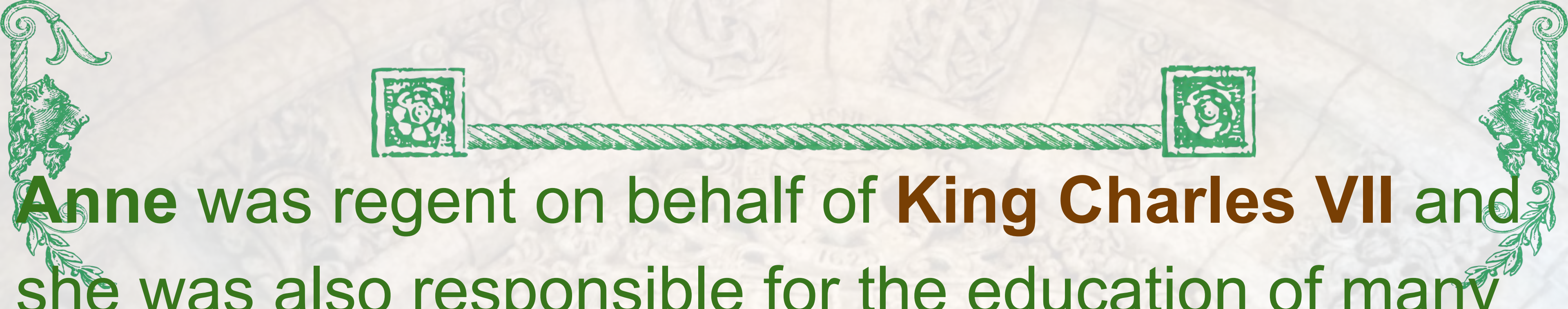
Henry and Diane de Poitiers



Diane was born in **1499** and died in **1566**.

She had become lady-in-waiting for **Louise of Savoy** and for **King Francis' first wife - Claude**, daughter of **Louis XI**.

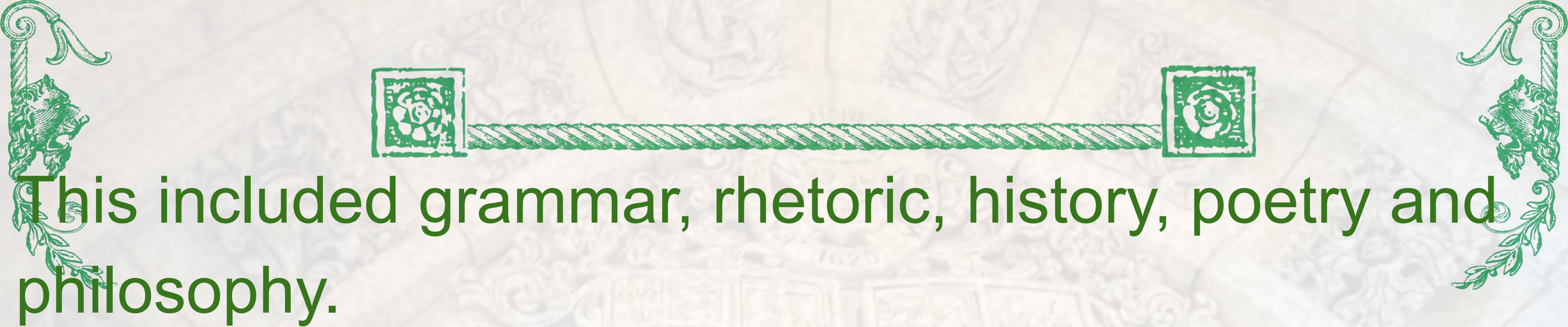
Diane de Poitiers, like **Louise of Savoy** (Henry's grandmother), was also trained by **Anne de Beaujeu**.



Anne was regent on behalf of **King Charles VII** and she was also responsible for the education of many of the children of the nobility.

Under **Anne's** direction, **Diane** became intellectually and politically astute.

She had been tutored in what was considered **'Renaissance Humanism'**.



This included grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and philosophy.

The rationale for this teaching was to train students to be eloquent, clear, and to be articulate in speech and writing.

Diane also learned Latin, Greek, music, hunting and the art of conversation.



She remained an avid hunter and sportswoman into her mature years.

In 1514, she was also **married at age 15** to a nobleman in King Francis' court, **Louis de Breze**; he died in **1531**, when **she was 32 years old**.



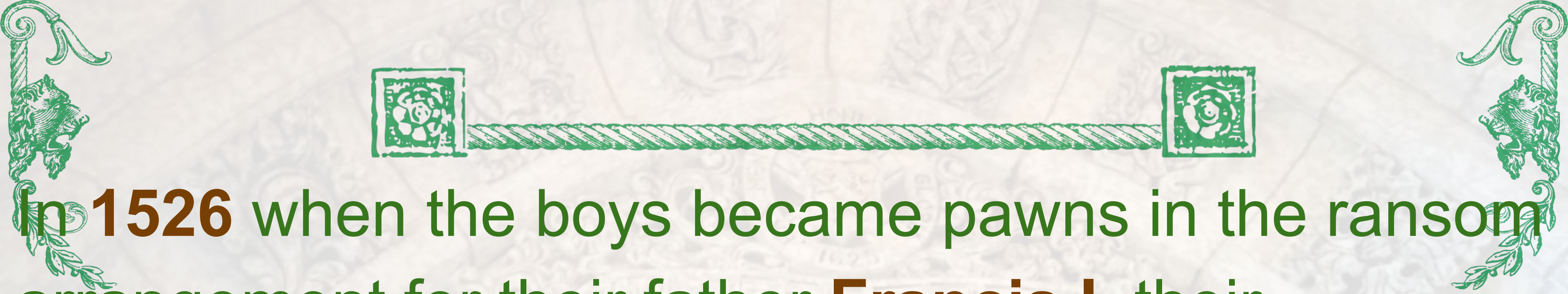
Diane became the **lady-in-waiting to Queen Claude** while her husband was still alive.

As lady-in-waiting, she had developed a fondness for **Claude's** children, and a **special bond with Henry. Claude had died in 1524 while their father was at war.**



Queen Claude of France





In **1526** when the boys became pawns in the ransom arrangement for their father **Francis I**, their grandmother (**Louise of Savoy**) was unable to accompany them to their captors.

Diane was chosen to accompany the boys to the exchange location when Francis I was released from captivity.




It was said that she fondly embraced them before they were taken away.

It is reputed that while Henry was in captivity, he read a book (**Amadis**) about a knight errant in which the heroine reminded him of **Diane de Poitiers**, his deceased mother's lady-in-waiting.



To him, she represented the ideal gentlewoman.
(Remember, she knew how to hunt and was a sportswoman).

When he came back from captivity in **1530**, his infatuation with Diane came to fruition. She had become a widow in **1531 when she was 32 years old.**



Diane de Poitiers became Henry's mistress after his marriage to Catherine de Medici which took place in **1533.**

It is believed, based on their correspondence, that **she became his mistress in 1534.**

She was 35 years old and he was 15. Her youthful beauty was admired well into her fifties.



Even though Henry had other mistresses, Diane de Poitiers was his lifelong companion.

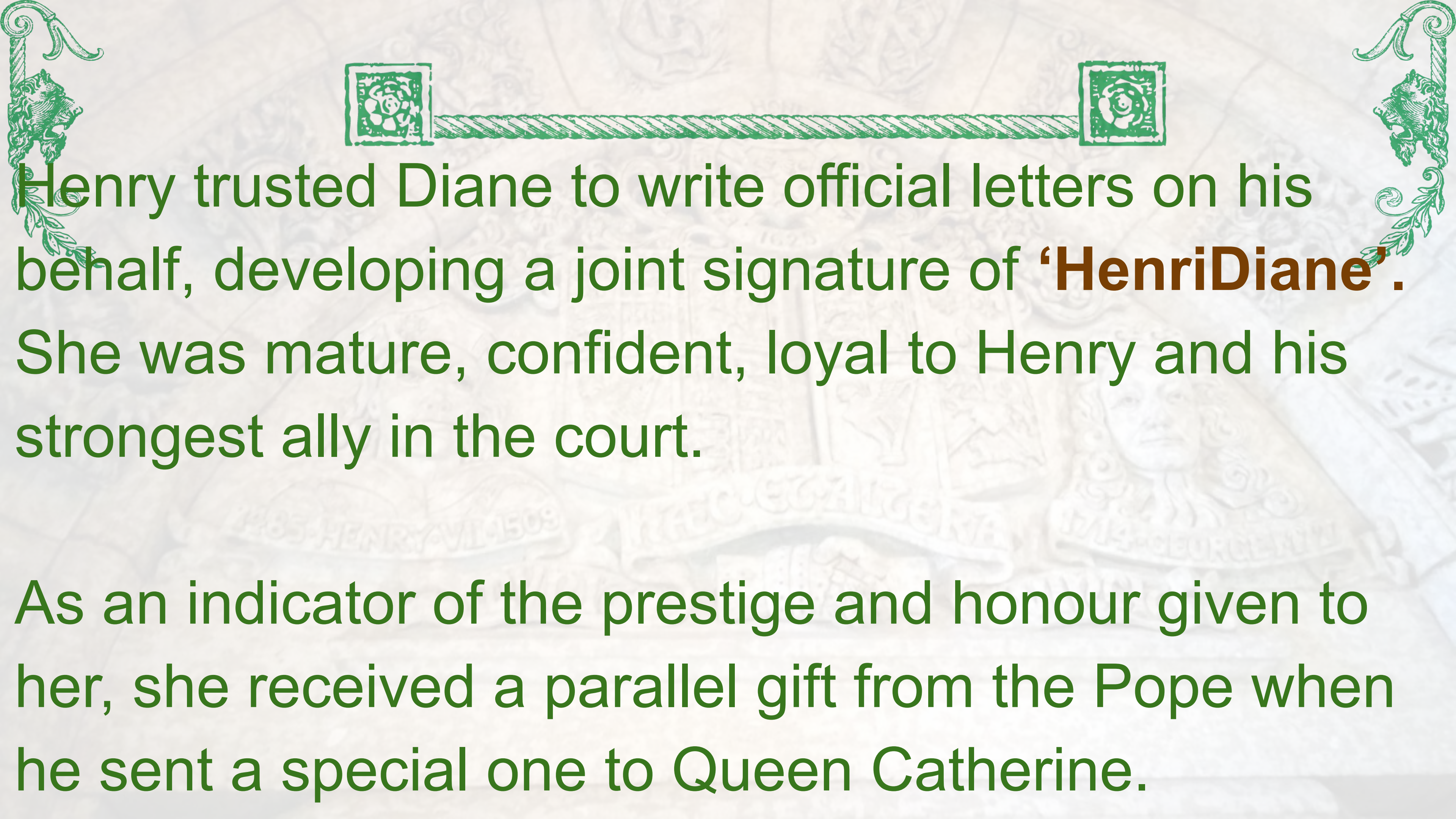
It is said that she had the most influence on his life for 25 years, and was one of the most powerful women in France.



Diane was given the **responsibility of educating Henry's children until 1551.**

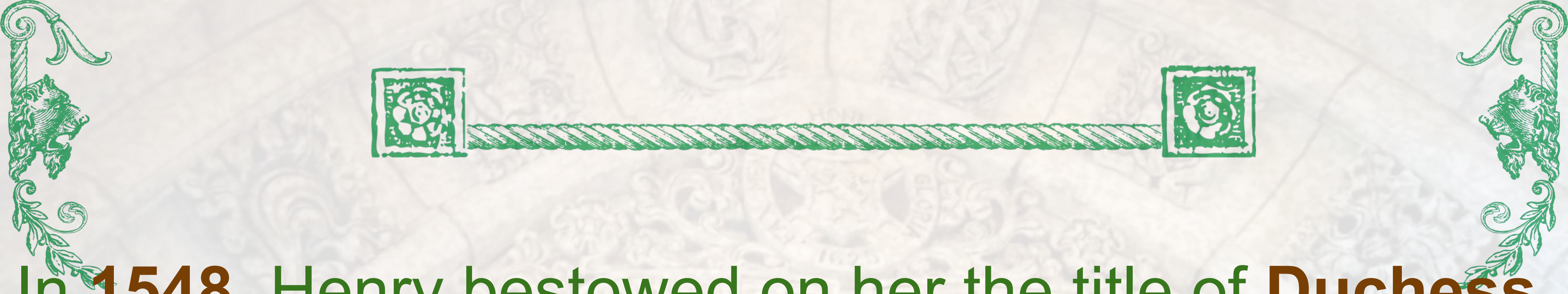
Their governor and governess, **Jean and Françoise d'Humières**, took their orders from Diane.

Henry preferred his mistress above Catherine and did not want Catherine involved in palace politics.



Henry trusted Diane to write official letters on his behalf, developing a joint signature of **‘HenriDiane’**. She was mature, confident, loyal to Henry and his strongest ally in the court.

As an indicator of the prestige and honour given to her, she received a parallel gift from the Pope when he sent a special one to Queen Catherine.



In **1548**, Henry bestowed on her the title of **Duchess of Valentinois**. In **1553**, she was made **Duchesse d'Etampes**.

Henry went so far as to entrust her with the **Crown Jewels of France**, virtually crowning her as queen.



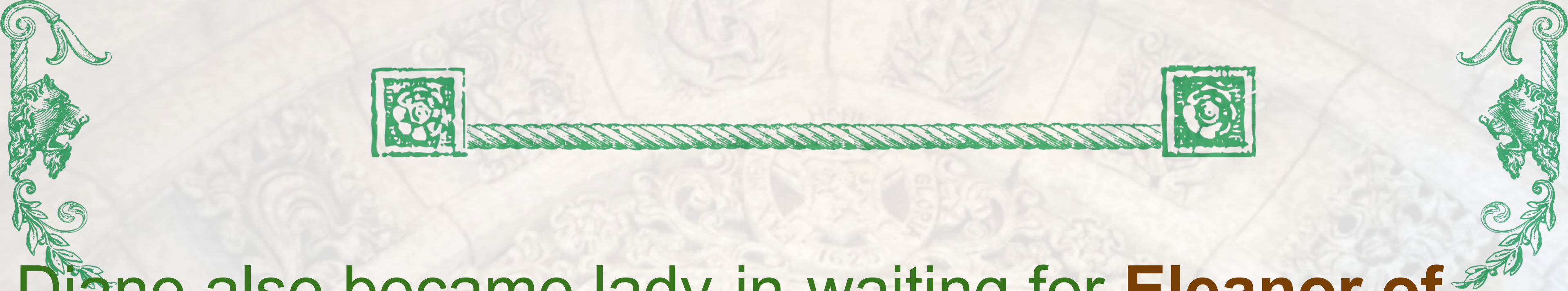
An ambassador to the court reported that Henry displayed many public acts of inappropriate behaviour with Diane in the presence of guests to the court.

These included sitting on her lap while either chatting about politics, playing the guitar, or inappropriately fondling her.



Henry remodeled one of the palaces for her, and bequeathed her with royal property that Catherine wanted for herself.

Catherine was not a happy camper with Diane being accorded honor above her.



Diane also became lady-in-waiting for **Eleanor of Austria, Francis' second wife and sister to Charles V**, whom he married as part of the ransom conditions.

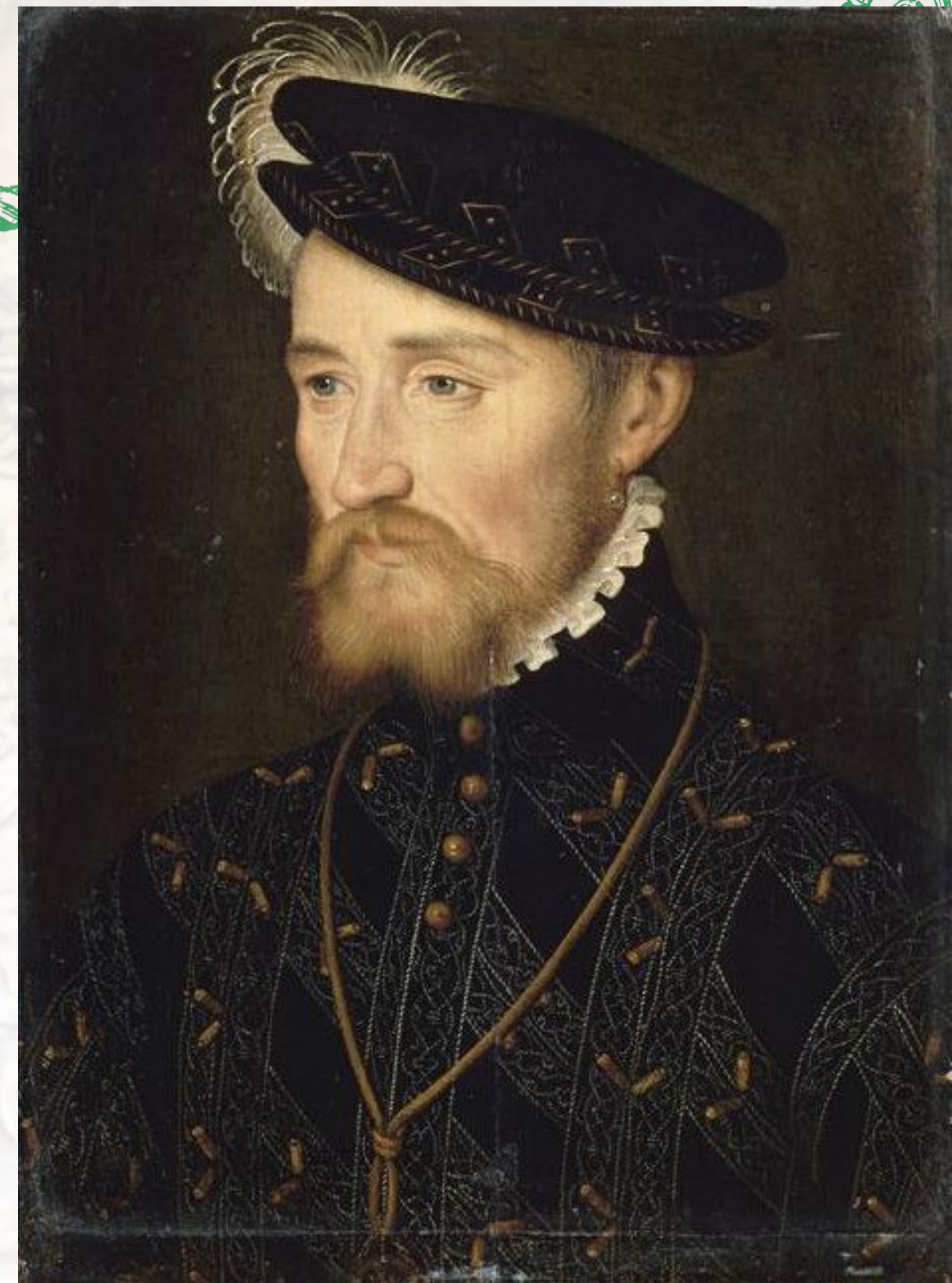
Diane's daughter **Francoise** became Catherine's chief lady-in-waiting.



Henry and The Catholic Nobility

Under Henry's reign, the **arch-enemies** of all French Protestants, **the Guise brothers**, gained and kept great influence on the persecution of Protestants and the Wars of Religion.

Francis Guise, Henry's boyhood friend, had become **Francis Duke of Guise**, and his brother **Charles** became **Cardinal of Lorraine**.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles,_Cardinal_of_Lorraine#/media/File:Cardinal_de_Lorraine.jpg

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis,_Duke_of_Guise#/media/File:Francois_de_Lorraine.JPG



Their sister, **Mary of Guise**, had married **James V of Scotland** in 1538.

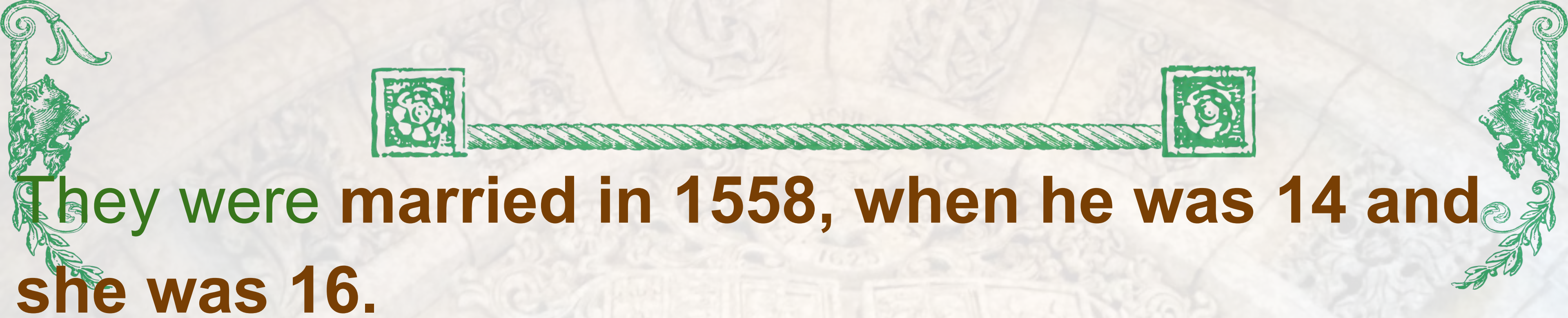
She had a daughter known as **Mary Queen of Scots** (1542).

When James V had passed away, Mary was brought to the French court at **5 ½ years old** to be raised by Catherine.



Her mother, **Mary of Guise**, governed Scotland as **regent** on her daughter's behalf.

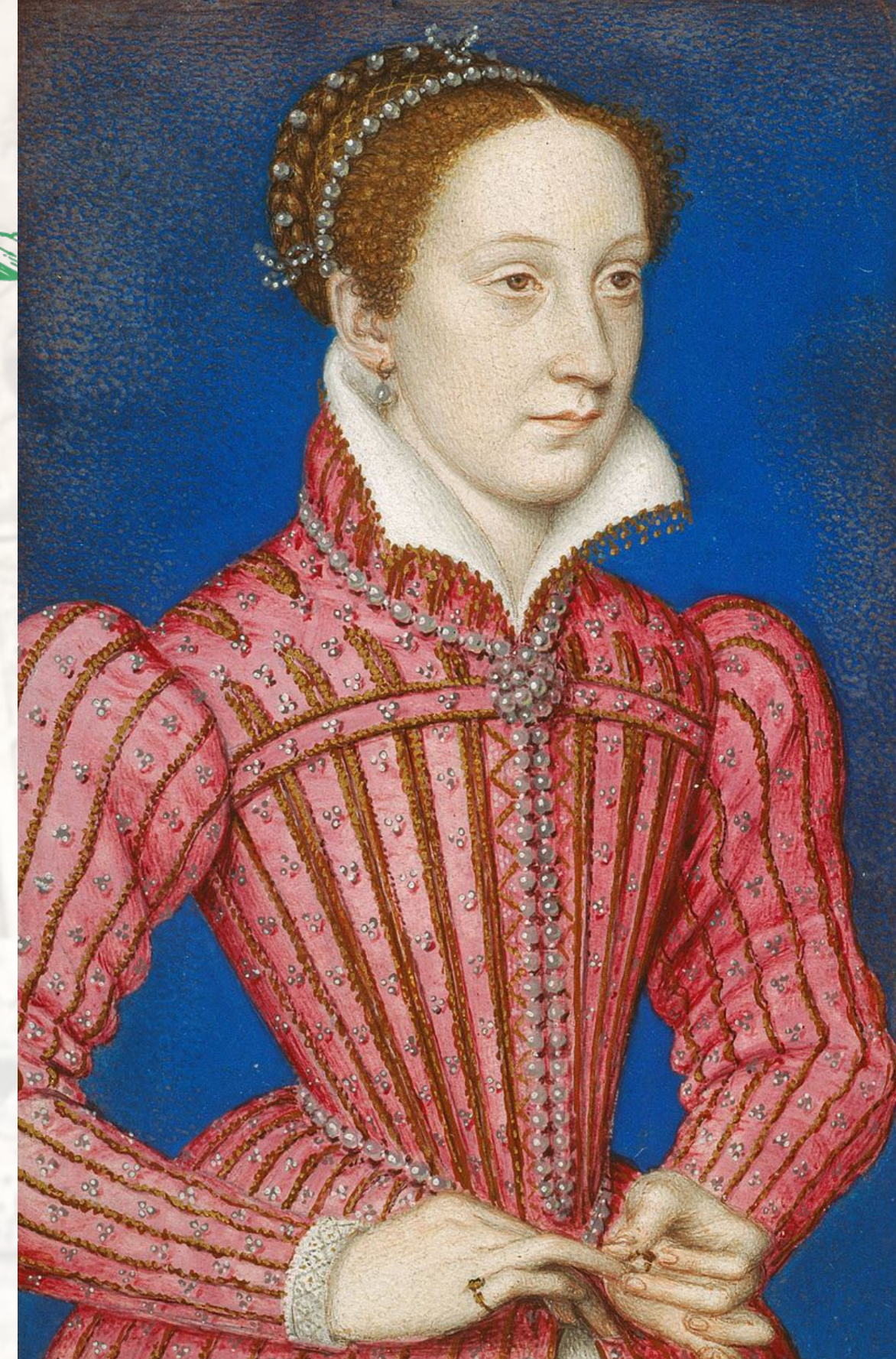
Henry's son, Francis II (1544), was betrothed to **Mary Queen of Scots** when he was 4 and she was 6 years old.



They were married in 1558, when he was 14 and she was 16.

Henry II had hoped to use her as a claim to the throne of Scotland, and probably even England.

He had her sign documents to the effect that the throne would remain French even if she died without an heir.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_II_of_France#/media/File:FrancoisII.jpg

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary,_Queen_of_Scots#/media/File:Fran%C3%A7ois_Clouet_-_Mary,_Queen_of_Scots_\(1542-87\)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary,_Queen_of_Scots#/media/File:Fran%C3%A7ois_Clouet_-_Mary,_Queen_of_Scots_(1542-87)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)



This of course, did not happen.

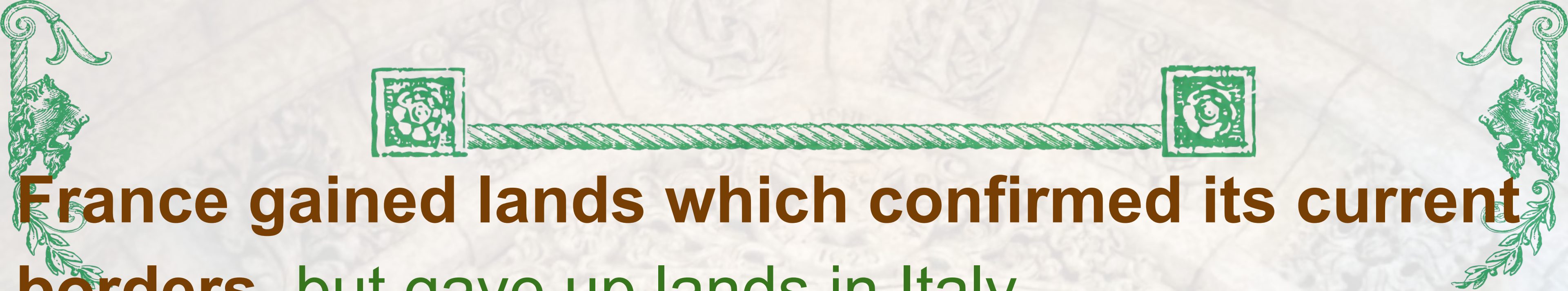
Henry II died in 1559 and his son, Francis II, ruled France for just 1 year before he died in December of 1560. Making Mary a widow.

Mary had also lost her mother in **June of 1560.**

Henry's Death

In 1559, Henry had signed a peace treaty (**Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis**) that signaled the end of the Italian Wars which began in **1521**.

During the final years of the war, Henry had made alliances with the **Ottomans** and the **Lutheran Princes of Germany**, which forced **Charles V** to abdicate his rule as the **Holy Roman Emperor**.



France gained lands which confirmed its current borders, but gave up lands in Italy.

This also brought **peace between England and France,** as the treaty was signed by **Elizabeth I of England.**

This treaty was sealed with *two more marriages of convenience.*



**Henry's sister Margaret Duchess of Berry married
Philibert Duke of Savoy.**

**Henry's daughter Elizabeth of Valois married
Philip II, son of Charles V.**

Charles V now ruled only Spain, which remained the
dominant European power.



Henry organized a sumptuous celebration of the peace between him and his enemies, which coincided with the two wedding celebrations - that of his sister and his daughter, to his previous enemies.



On June 30 1559, Henry participated in the celebratory games which included jousting.

He was pierced through his eyeball with a broken lance, with splinters penetrating his brain. **By July 10 1559**, Henry was dead.